REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed **on 12 September 2008**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-29. Examiner rejected claims 1, 11-12, 22-23, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Examiner rejected claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Gai et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0160903, hereinafter "Gai"), Sailer et al. ("*History Based Distributed Filtering – A Tagging Approach to Network-Level Access Control*" IEEE 2000, pages 373-382, hereinafter "Sailer"), and Chou et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,920,106, hereinafter "Chou").

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Examiner rejected claims 1, 11-12, 22-23, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. More specifically, Examiner avers that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "the management class," and the claims do not set forth what exactly the management class or method in which the management communication is generated.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 1, 11-12, 22-23, and 29 to change "the management class" to "a management class." (Note that the management class of the node indicates the node being a subnet manager (manager node) or an endnode.) Applicant has also amended claims 1, 11-12, 22-23, and 29 to clarify that the determination is based on a management class of the node the management communication is originated from. In addition, Applicant has removed the claim limitation of the method. These amendments find support in page 7 of the instant application. No new matter has been added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Examiner rejected claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gai, in view of Sailer, further in view of Chou. Applicant

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respectfully disagrees. Neither Gai, Sailer, nor Chou discloses determining whether the management communication is a first or second category management communication based on a **management class** of the node the management communication originated from and whether the management communication is **a request or a reply**.

In embodiments of the present invention, all subnet management packets (SMP) are separated into four categories based on **the management class of the source** of the packet, such as a subnet *manager* or an *endnode*, and the **message type** of the packet, such as being a subnet management *request* or subnet management *reply* (see instant application, page 7). A trusted node can send and receive all four categories of packets, whereas an untrusted node can only send packets in certain categories and receive packets in other categories (see instant application, page 8).

Examiner avers that Gai discloses establishing a first category of communication to include a request from a manager node to an endnode and a reply from the manager node to a request from an endnode (see Office Action, page 3, last paragraph). However, the cited text, namely pars. [0009]-[0013], [0047], [0062], and [0076]-[0083], merely discloses the use of *membership in security group(s)*, as tagged with security group tags (SGTs), as the condition used to permit or deny traffic (see Gai, pars. {0047], [0062], [0076-0083]), wherein the security group associates a set of destinations and a set of sources authorized to access the set of destinations (see Gai, par. [0009]-[0013]). Gai does not disclose categorizing packets based on whether the packet is a *reply* from the manager node or a *request* from an endnode.

Examiner acknowledges that Gai does not explicitly disclose determining whether the management communication is a first category based on the management class (see Office action, page 4, second paragraph). Nevertheless, Examiner avers that Sailer discloses determining whether the management

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communication is a first category based on the management class (see Office action, page 4, second paragraph). Applicant respectfully disagrees, because Sailer discloses determining whether to send out packets based on the **clearance of the receiver and path**, and to receive packets based on the **integrity class of the packet** (see Sailer, page 375, col. 2). In the Sailer system, the integrity class of a packet is determined by the node/path with the lowest integrity clearing that has been passed by this packet (see Sailer, page 376, col. 1). Sailer's "integrity class" is different from the management class in the claimed embodiments because the management class indicates whether the node is *a subnet manager or an endnode*.

In summary, Gai does not disclose categorizing packets based on whether the packet is a *reply* from the manager node or a *request* from an endnode, and Sailer does not disclose using a management class to determine a category of a communication. Therefore Gai and Sailer, in combination with Chou, cannot render embodiments of the present invention obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 1, 11, 12, 22, 23, and 29 to clarify that in embodiments of the present invention, the system determines whether the management communication is a first or second category management communication based on a management class of the node the management communication is originated from and whether the management communication is a request or a reply. These amendments find support in page 7 of the instant application. No new matter has been added.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 11, 12, 22, 23, and 29 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 2-10, which depend upon claim 1, claims 13-21, which depend upon claim 12, and claims 24-28, which depend upon claim 23, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

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CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

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